

**Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and the Environment  
January 20, 2010**

**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Matthew Raker – Chair, Ashley Featherstone- ViceChair, Ryan Blau, Jane Mathews, Melanie Brethauer, Sasha Vrtunski, Duncan McPherson

**Staff:** Councilmember Cecil Bothwell, Maggie Ullman, Rachel Doebber, Jessica Dunlap

**Guests:** Perry Dror, Ben Colvin, Michelle Brantley and Jennifer Langton

**1. Welcome new Council Liaison Cecil Bothwell**

-Matt Raker welcomed the group and new City Council Liaison Cecil Bothwell to SACEE. He asked Councilmember Bothwell to speak about his interest in joining SACEE.

-Councilmember Bothwell spoke about his interest in SACEE and his personal interest in sustainability, and his experience in green issues in regards to land use. He stated that he is a big believer that the City can save money through conservation and green energy innovation.

-Councilmember Bothwell spoke about the importance of community readiness and energy consumption.

-He thanked SACEE for their work and he looks forward to working with the committee.

**2. Introductions Committee Members**

The Committee members and SACEE Staff introduced themselves and their current work in the community and/or with the City of Asheville.

**3. Action Items**

- a. Review, comments, acceptance of December 16, 2009 meeting minutes

Ryan made a motion to accept the Minutes, Ashley Featherstone seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**4. Presentations**

- a. Asheville GO – Dan Leroy

Matt Raker introduced Dan Leroy from Asheville Green Opportunities. Matt stated that Dan's presentation follows well from the previous presentation and discussion from last month on Environmental Justice.

Dan spoke about his work with GO and how they empower the 'disconnected' youth in our area. Dan stated that there are two core issues that Asheville GO addresses – environmental degradation and how

pollution disproportionately affects poorer communities, and communities of color.

AshevilleGO is an emerging non-profit with two programs – a paid job training program and a job placement program. These programs are primarily for 16-24 year olds from low income families.

Asheville GO works with ABTech on continuing education programs, life coaching and mentoring, and preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs to assist these youth with getting and retaining gainful employment.

Through these programs, AshevilleGO is able to build trust in the community by helping the disconnected youth, and build partnerships with local businesses in the area.

AshevilleGO is also conducting energy audits in low income communities through CDBG Grant monies. Dan says that he hopes to expand this operation in the future.

Dan concluded that Asheville GO is interested in expanding opportunities to more people, particularly women, and they are hoping to open a GO Center, and continue to build key strategic partnerships with YWCA and the Buncombe County Gang Prevention Project (GVPP) to assist the disconnected youth in the community.

## **5. Discussion**

### **a. SACEE member requirements**

-The group was in consensus that no more architects were needed on the committee, and that diversification would be beneficial. The group was also in consensus that they would like to see the applications and give feedback.

-Maggie said she will check the timeline on when the applications are due and make sure this is feasible.

-An informal Subcommittee regarding member requirements for the committee was formed including Jane, Melanie, Ashley, and Duncan.

-No motions were made, and this item will be discussed more in depth at the February meeting.

### **b. SACEE Annual Report**

-Sasha Vrtunski and Duncan McPherson worked on the Annual Report, which contains a brief overview, mission, and list of accomplishments.

-This report gives Council an idea of what SACEE is doing, and includes the three tier goals that SACEE members established at the October retreat.

- Sasha also mentioned that the report includes a list of members and their contact information.
- Councilmember Bothwell suggested also including the vision statement into the Annual Report, even though it is already included in the Sustainability Management Plan.

## **6. Staff Report**

Maggie reported that the Sustainability Office has applied for the NC Business Grant, she will be presenting at a City/County Webinar tomorrow, and the first EECBG block grant Building Inspector Training took place on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

The 2010 Council Goals are: Affordable, Sustainable, Job Growth and Community Development, Safe, and Fiscal Responsibility. Maggie pointed out that sustainable initiatives cross all of these goals and SACEE can play a very important advisory role to council in the coming year.

The Financial Crossroads Whitepaper: Maggie said that she will e-mail this document to the committee, and encouraged everyone to read it carefully and thoughtfully. The committee will come back in February to discuss the details.

-In basic terms, the Whitepaper states that Asheville is undergoing significant financial constraints, and with 16 Master Plans to fund over the next 20 years prioritizing and strategic planning will be essential in the coming year.

-Councilmember Bothwell stated that energy conservation can help the city save money and fund other things.

## **Public Comments**

Perry Dror, Ben Colvin, Michelle Brantley and Jennifer Langton attended the meetings as guests and introduced themselves to the committee.

## **7. Next meeting February 17th at 3:00pm in the Public Works Building.**